



## MINUTES OF THE CITY OF MIRAMAR COMMISSION WORKSHOP

**June 29, 2022**

**4:00 P.M.**

A workshop of the Miramar City Commission to discuss the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 Budget was called to order by Mayor Messam at 4:07 p.m. on June 29, 2022, in the City Commission Chambers, Town Center, 2300 Civic Center Place, Miramar, Florida.

Upon call of the roll, the following members of the City Commission were present:

Mayor Wayne M. Messam  
Vice Mayor Yvette Colbourne  
Commissioner Winston F. Barnes  
Commissioner Maxwell B. Chambers (Late 4:09 p.m.)  
Commissioner Alexandra P. Davis

Members of staff were present in the Commission Chambers:

City Manager Dr. Roy Virgin  
Budget Director Rafael Sanmiguel  
Chief Financial Officer Susan Gooding-Liburd  
Chief Budget Officer Norman Mason  
Peter Napoli, Stantec, Outside Budget Consultant  
City Attorney Norman Powell (Remote)  
City Clerk Denise A. Gibbs

- **Fiscal Year 2023 Budget**

CITY MANAGER VIRGIN: Good evening, Mr. Mayor, Vice Mayor, Commissioners. I want to first acknowledge the budget team for the tremendous work they have been putting in to getting us to this workshop, and in addition to the department heads who have also contributed significantly to get us here. Before we start, I want to just give a brief introduction, and I wanted to say virtually every plan, decision, action, and program can be communicated in the financial language of the budget. The service delivery effects office dollars and cents, and projection are inescapable. The fiscal limitation of the City in the last two years because of COVID-19, and the possibility of additional belt tightening

because of supply chain and cost escalation emphasize the significance of the budget process, which is, basically, the allocation of scarce resources to a magnitude of needed and desired public service. So, with that, I want to introduce our budget director, Mr. Rafael, if you don't mind, to start the presentation of this workshop. Mr. Rafael.

Budget Director Rafael Sanmiguel thanked all City staff who contributed to the drafting of the budget, particularly the staff of the Management & Budget Department. He gave a PowerPoint presentation on the proposed FY 2023 Budget, as provided in the backup, highlighting the following:

- Upcoming key dates: On July 1, 2022, the City would receive the Broward County Property Appraiser's (BCPA) taxable value numbers; Wednesday, July 6, 2022, the City Commission would vote to set the FY 2023 maximum millage rate, fire assessment, and stormwater assessment rates, and set the dates for the September public hearings; August 24, 2022, the BCPA would send out TRIM notices to property owners, which included proposed property taxes, and non-ad valorem assessment set at the July 6 meeting; Wednesday, September 14, 2022, the Commission would adopt the final fire and stormwater assessment rates; Thursday, September 29, 2022, the second public hearing; October 1, 2022, the FY 2023 budget took effect
- The City's public hearings could not be held on the same day as the Broward County Commission, and the Broward School Board meetings
- The newspaper advertisement sent out by the City had to run 15 days after the first budget public hearing, so it was scheduled to run Sunday, September 25, 2022, and the final budget hearing had to be held two to five days after the advertisement, hence the final budget public hearing on September 29, 2022
- Total proposed City budget for all funds was \$333 million; the General Fund was 59 percent or \$169 million; enterprise funds (utilities, stormwater) were 19 percent or \$53 million; internal service funds (health, risk, fleet, and IT) were 14 percent or \$46 million; debt service funds were four percent or \$12 million; capital project and special project funds were two percent each; sub-funds were less than one percent
- The General Fund increased 6.2 percent from FY 2022 to FY 2023, due mainly to increases in personnel services, a combination of collective bargaining, pension, and healthcare costs
- Operating increased by \$2.2 million due to contractual increases, supplies, and service charges
- General Fund revenues: Ad valorem accounted for 44 percent; permit fees and special assessments at 21 percent; other taxes at 11 percent combined; charges for services, including ticket sales, rentals, park fees at ten percent; intergovernmental revenues, including local government half-cent sales tax at nine percent; others (transfers from grants funds) at four percent; and miscellaneous at one percent
- The largest General Fund expenditure was salaries and benefits at 70 percent; operating at 21 percent; transfers to other funds to mainly fund debt service at five percent; other was at four percent

- There was no proposed increase to the millage rate or fire fee for FY 2023; the proposed millage rate was 7.1172; the proposed residential fire fee was at \$398.23
- Average taxable value on the average single-family home increased by \$7,500.00; the increase was wholly due to property valuation; increases were capped for homesteaded properties at around three percent, per the Save Our Homes provision; the average single-family home would see a modest tax increase of \$53.13 or \$4.42 per month in FY 2023; properties with a higher valuation would correspond to a higher tax, those with a lower valuation would have a lower tax
- Average commercial property taxable value increased by \$30,640.00; that equated to tax increase of \$218.00; the size of the average commercial property saw no significant increase; no fire fee increase was proposed for commercial properties in FY 2023
- The City of Miramar would receive 33 percent of the total ad valorem tax.

Chief Budget Officer Norman Mason continued the presentation, looking at other factors affecting the tax bill, and the budget, as detailed in the backup, highlighting the following:

- Ad valorem tax revenues were apportioned as follows: Miramar at 33 percent, School Board of Broward County at 32 percent, Broward County at 28 percent, for a total of 95 percent; the remaining five percent went to other taxing districts: South Broward Hospital District, South Florida Water Management District, the Florida Inland Navigation District, and Children's Services Council of Broward County
- Each taxing district held budget meetings, at which a millage rate was adopted; some had more than one millage rate, totaling a dozen millage rates affecting Broward property owners' tax bills, so owners were encouraged to attend all public hearings for the abovenamed taxing districts
- Budget increases from one year to the next were mainly due to: population increases that led to increase in the demand for services; supply and demand issues; collective bargaining was 100 percent responsible for salary increases; healthcare; other post-employment benefits (OPEB); addressing crime and other safety issues; upgrades in technology, and addressing related concerns; the COVID-19 pandemic; increased event costs; the Ukrainian war; rising energy and fuel costs; inflation
- As staff built the FY 2023 budget, they faced many uncertainties regarding projections for revenues and expenditures
- The State of Florida would adopt their budget on July 1, 2022, with an 8.3 percent increase to \$110 billion
- The City of Miramar's budget would increase by 5.2 percent for FY 2023; with salaries and benefits going up 6.2 percent, this meant staff saved the City a little over one percent on its operating expenses and transfers.

Peter Napoli, Stantec, continued the presentation, reviewing the five-year General Fund forecast illustrated in the backup, highlighting the following:

- The five-year forecast allowed the City to evaluate the future consequences of current decisions
- The goal was to help the City in its long-term financial plan with a more sustainable General Fund
- The key inputs and assumptions updated in the model included: adjusted FY 2022 budget; preliminary FY 2023 budget; five-year forecast reflected the continuation of the capital improvement transfer at one percent expenses; continuation of the City's Vehicle Replacement Program; continuation of OPEB and pension trust fund transfers; updated debt service obligations; two more years of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding deemed onetime cashflows; healthcare cost savings initiatives
- Projection assumptions included a variety of cost escalation factors, looking at all revenue sources and expenditures for the City in accordance with inflation, population growth, and other factors
- The dashboard illustrated the next five-year forecasts, along with different scenarios based on various adjustments.

Chief Financial Officer Susan Gooding-Liburd continued the presentation, going over the financial update for the City, highlighting the following:

- The City remained forward thinking by putting in place policies to maintain Miramar's financial stability
- In 2010 the Emergency Preparedness Fund was established for a policy of four percent
- In 2014 the Financial Stabilization account was established
- In 2019 two policies were implemented: the OPEB Trust Fund, and the Pension Trust Fund
- At the end of the last Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR), the City ended with a fund balance total of \$47,320,793.00.

Mr. Sanmiguel continued the presentation, giving an update on the ARPA funding, highlighting the following:

- Miramar was awarded \$22 million under the ARPA, receiving the final amount of \$11 million on June 6, 2022
- Key deadlines: All the funds had to be obligated by December 31, 2024; funds should be fully expended by December 31, 2026
- Allowable use categories for ARPA funds included: to offset the reduction of revenue due to the pandemic; community outreach, using funds to help households, businesses, and nonprofits; to fund CIP for water, and broadband infrastructure for rural areas, of which the City had little; pay for eligible workers
- The City expected to recognize \$18 million in lost revenue starting in FY 2020; the balance of the \$22 million would be used for community outreach projects, including \$2 million for CIP projects

- Proposed use of community outreach funding included: \$775,000.00 toward mortgage, rental, and utilities payment assistance for households; \$375,000.00 for small business assistance; \$350,000.00 earmarked for nonprofit organizations; \$150,000.00 to help Miramar businesses with technology needs; \$65,000.00 for workforce development; \$50,000.00 toward the City's nonperishable food pantry; the rest to go towards programs to help the Miramar community bridge the learning gap resulting from the pandemic, and bridge digital divides in the community.

CITY MANAGER VIRGIN: Thank you to the budget team, again, for providing a comprehensive analysis of the budget process. As we know, Mr. Mayor, the budget is based on past performance, planned changes in expected level of services; the budget recognizes population change, increase demand for services, staff requirements, and more. However, the budget is not a guess, it is an intellectual estimate of future activity. Moreover, the budget communicates the overall goals of the City's operational plans. So you have listened to the presentation, the budget analysis, and I want you to know that staff has given all the options, all the available data that is in front of us, and have made the best possible recommendations where they are, and some of them are just plain facts, and have presented them the way they are. And, at this juncture, I turn it back over to you, sir.

MAYOR MESSAM: Thank you, Mr. Manager. At this time, I'll just go down the Commission, if there are any comments or questions for staff, starting with Vice Mayor Colbourne, you're recognized.

MAYOR MESSAM: I just want to thank Mr. Manager and our budget directors, and staff for the presentation, for all the work that you have put into this. I do look forward to going through the budget books that have been presented, and meeting with you subsequent to that. And that's really my comments for right now. Thank you.

MAYOR MESSAM: Thank you. Commissioner Chambers, you're recognized.

COMMISSIONER CHAMBERS: Thank you so much. Thank you, Mr. Rafael. Thanks to the entire team, City Manager. I know you just got on board, but you're fantastic. It's astonishing where we are today. I knew we had it in us, and I knew we could fight, and we can battle whatever get thrown at us. The report speak for itself from where were years ago. I remember when I just got on, one of the things I advocated for, to make sure we have a long-term plan five years out, and that was put in place, and at one time, the cry was that the City of Miramar was on fire. Of course, we face some challenges, but I knew it wasn't true. We implement, sustain, put policies and procedures in place. In the meantime, we take care of our employees, and, most of all, we take care of residents very well, even during the pandemic; I mean we were the leaders here in South Florida, making sure we were doing what we were supposed to be doing for our residents, and it speak volumes. So far, we're looking good on paper, and we're looking good in person, so I'm pleased with the direction we're heading. Things going to come at us, of course, but we are prepared, and we're ready for years to come. We're always going to have challenges,

but it's not how we fall, it's how we get up and move forward. I want to thank the entire staff, all the employees here, City of Miramar. One of the good things is the folks that we have at the top, our residents and businesses, and this dais; this is one of the most progressive daises that I've seen in quite some time, and we're getting it done, and the laws that we have, management, and staff, and I'm just excited as to what yet to come for Miramar, so thank you so much.

MAYOR MESSAM: Commissioner Davis, you're recognized.

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Thank you. I'd like to thank the City Manager, the budget staff, and the executive, as well as the directors of departments, and so on, who've been involved in the budget process. I did have a question, however, with the company that's doing the projections. I know that you had mentioned the last time before us, and the projections, and there's been a change. If you could just go over those changes -- I believe I saw four things. One of them, it seems to me, -- maybe there's only one thing that, maybe, you could not have predicted. But in terms of increasing wages, is that something you couldn't predict? That slide that you had with the things, I think it was four or five things, if you could just go over that for me, because I just want to get an idea from one year to the next how your projections stood up.

MR. NAPOLI: Absolutely. Yes, ma'am. So the higher salary increases refers to the escalation that we had built in on the City's total salaries, so it's an average over all the different employee groups. And last year, as part of one of the ongoing initiatives for financial sustainability, we had assumed a lower average increase in salaries, but when we came back this year to update the project, update the results, we realized that that was no longer a realistic expectation for the five-year periods. So, on average, the increase year over year for the salaries, that was one of the pressures that resulted in the updated results. The higher inflationary increases for operations in capital expenses, that's the result of the recent events over the past year; inflation has been extraordinarily high, and we expect that to continue, at least in the near term, so we felt that it would be even more accurate for us to update our year-over-year inflation and adjustment, and that we applied all the different supplies, operating materials, etc. within the budget. And then the higher debt service obligation, we had a transfer to the debt service fund, so the General Fund partially pays for certain debt service, outstanding debt service obligations, and there was, I believe, a recent debt service issuance last year that we had not previously projected, so that transfer went up in total by an amount. And the higher, near-term capital investment that the capital that is being funded by the General Fund this year and next year was higher than what we previously expected.

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Yeah. I just wanted to make sure that -- I don't know how often you meet with staff just after the projections that these changes came into play, except, of course, the inflation, but the high debt service obligation, the capital investments, and so on, I don't know if that should have been included, or could have been included, or could have been updated. Because it seems a far cry from -- this is just last year, and look where we're at in 2024, we're no longer -- we're way below where we thought we

were going to be. And the factors, I can understand, maybe, the inflation factor, but the other ones, I'm not too sure that that should have affected your projections like that. The other thing I wanted to look at was another slide, where in 2026, it seems like we are no longer in that situation, meaning 2024, we're below baseline, and I believe 2025, and all of a sudden 2026 we're good. So how do you explain that?

MR. NAPOLI: If we could go to that slide. Was this the slide you were referring to?

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Or there was another one. Similar to that one, but --

MAYOR MESSAM: That's the solution. I think it's the first one.

MR. NAPOLI: So it's a situation where in '24, the results --

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: No, not that one.

MAYOR MESSAM: No, it's the first scenario.

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: No. There was one where '26 was above, '25 was below, and in year 2026, it was now above the baseline.

MAYOR MESSAM: Above or below, Commissioner, for '26?

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: I mean it looks like it's '27, now that I'm looking at it.

MAYOR MESSAM: But look to the left, the one that you're seeing, to the left, it'll say: Updated baseline, or potential solution.

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Stable reserves, and it says like -- '25 is under, '26 is under, and then all of a sudden, sorry, '27 is above the stable reserves. That one. Yeah.

MR. NAPOLI: I believe this is the one you're referring to.

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Yeah.

MAYOR MESSAM: Yeah.

MR. NAPOLI: So in this situation, the combined effect of the increase in property tax revenues from the higher property taxable value increase. So we increased it from five percent on average to seven and a half percent for the two-year period after next year. So 2024 and 2025. So the overall property tax revenues are higher in this scenario, and then the combined effective, that, and the reduction to the workforce over the three years, the cost savings from that resolves the budgetary gap. So you can see on the right-hand graph, where we show those long lines for revenues and expenses, you can see where, beginning in 2024, after these changes take place, you're in a situation where revenues

are more closely matched to expenses, so you're not operating at a deficit each year, you're, basically, maintaining your reserve fund balance in the City's General Fund. So it was really a combination of those two: the cost savings from the workforce reduction, and then the increased property tax revenues.

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: So providing we do those, that millage rate would not increase?

MR. NAPOLI: So there's a really not a -- it's not as much of an actionable change on the property tax side, because this is just assuming a more optimistic taxable value increase.

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: But in terms of staff, because you've included staff in there.

MR. NAPOLI: Yeah, that is the more actionable item or change there with the workforce reduction.

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: And the workforce reduction is due to attrition, --

MR. NAPOLI: That's the assumption --

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: -- or cost savings?

MR. NAPOLI: Yeah, it could be achieved in a number of different ways.

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Compared from last year to this year; how did that manifest itself, in terms of the attrition, and did that live up to what you projected?

MR. NAPOLI: I may have to defer that question.

MR. SANMIGUEL: Could you repeat the question again?

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: A lot of what we're basing this on is property values, taxable values, and also seems to be attrition, or folks that take, are retired or leave. So based on last year's and this year's, were we in line with what was predicted?

MR. SANMIGUEL: Are we in line with what we have predicted for attrition? Is that what you're asking?

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: What's that?

MR. SANMIGUEL: Were you asking me if we're in line --

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: The gentleman from FAMS, right now you're saying we have ten people, staff reduction over like the next, I forget, let's say '23, '24, whatever, that you're going to have a certain amount of revenue coming in based on the taxable value



if it stays at a certain amount. So there's some things that are not under our control, but there's some things that may be under our control.

MR. SANMIGUEL: Right.

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: So I was asking about the projection last year compared to this year with the things that were under our control, how did we do.

MR. SANMIGUEL: So for the things that were under our control, vis-à-vis, the collective bargaining, for example, we didn't really keep to our target. Remember back in a couple of meetings, or a couple of budgets ago, we were saying the solution hinges on keeping the COLAs, or the growth of salaries to a one, one, and two-type situation for COLAs, so one percent, one percent, and two percent over the next three years. That didn't quite happen for any of the bargaining units, as we all know, so that's one of the things that was under our control. Another thing that's under our control was the VRIP, right, so that was a success in the end, because we're saving over \$5 million over the lifetime of the five-year window, but it could have been better; there could have been more savings in that regard. Things that are also under our control would be like CIP. CIP, it's costly in some senses to build all of the amenities that the citizens have come to expect also, that's also under our control, so we can reign it in a little bit too as well. Things that are not under our control are, for example, what Pete Napoli --

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Yeah, I got those. I'm good with those. I just want to make sure that the City Manager is aware of the things that are under our control, and that we look at what we said for the previous year, what we said we were going to do, and try to stick to that as much as possible. Things that are not under our control, that's one thing, but when it's under your control, and you have these consultants that we pay a good wage to give us good projections, to basically try to help us get to where we need to be, but then as soon as it's over, then we just go back doing what we want to do, and we're back here again. So I do want us to really take a look at that, and not have to come back here next year with suggestions that were done by the consultant that were under our control that we just tossed to the wind, and come back now, we're looking -- you know, tax increases and things like that. We have to tighten our belts, and try to follow as much as possible what the consultants asked us to do that's under our control. All right. The last thing, I know you mentioned the American Rescue Plan, and you mentioned some money going to nonprofits. So where's the list of non -- are there nonprofits in Miramar that you're giving some of this money to, because I'd really like to know. I know you mentioned Women in Distress, but who are these nonprofits?

MR. SANMIGUEL: And so the nonprofit list is some of the perennial list that we always get. Right.

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Are there any Miramar nonprofits that are benefiting from the list, and the American Rescue Plan?

MR. SANMIGUEL: So we have the Be Strong International; the Big Brother, Big Sister.

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Just quickly, just to cut to the chase. Are there any Miramar-based nonprofits that are going to benefit from the American Rescue Plan, the dollars that were allocated to us that we say that we are giving to nonprofits? And, if not, let's take a look at that. Who are the nonprofits in Miramar? What is it that they do? And are they going to be able to benefit from this pot of money?

MS. GAYLE: We can do that, Commissioner Davis. Shaun Gayle, Assistant City Manager. The Be Strong International is a nonprofit that currently does afterschool programs with the City of Miramar for middle school children, so we considered extending through that. Early Learning Coalition, we currently work with in the City of Miramar; they're not a Miramar-based business, but Early Learning Coalition we work with through our Early Childhood Program, so we could go back and look at the companies that are in the City of Miramar. What we had done is use the companies that come to us, typically, on an annual basis for funding through the City, and they do get funding through the budget process, and we thought about those organizations, because those are already vetted through our City Attorney's Office, so they do a legal background on those companies, and they have done so over the years whenever they do apply to us. So it was kind of seamless to use those, because we already know what they do, we already know they are legitimately vetted by our City Attorney's Office, so we went with those first, but we can certainly look at other nonprofits in the City of Miramar, and go through that same process to see how we can work with them.

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Yeah, I would like for you to get a list of the nonprofits in Miramar, which I'm sure Economic Development would have that; the list of the nonprofits in Miramar, what they do. I can think of one right now, which is CAC. What they do, and how we can help the ones based in Miramar based on what they do. Because a lot of these other national or nonprofits, they do get a lot of funding from elsewhere, but the fledgling ones that are trying to do their best in this community, but they have no voice, and we're not even keeping up tabs of who they are. And I know for a fact CAC does a lot of work here. I don't see -- are they on your list?

MS. GAYLE: They're not on the list, and we will do that on groundwork, and make sure that they can tie it back to COVID, because whatever we do with the ARPA funds have to tie back, so we'll reach out and find those nonprofits, see what they do, see if they have activities that can tie back COVID, and see how we can work with them to get some funding.

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Yeah, almost everything ties back to COVID, but if you could bring list back, before you disseminate the funds, to this Commission, I appreciate that. Thank you.

MS. GAYLE: Yes, ma'am.

MAYOR MESSAM: Thank you, Commissioner. Commissioner Barnes, you're recognized.

COMMISSIONER BARNES: Just some observations. Recently, I introduced a staff member to the team from the budget office, and I indicated that while we see them infrequently in our meetings at this level, they work 24 -- they work 12 months throughout the year to do the incredible work that they do. We are looking at a situation where an evolution of conditions have taken place over the last two years, even over the last six months. The Budget Department continues to do incredible work. We are facing challenges that didn't even exist in reality two years ago. I'm convinced that our job is to peruse this document, and those that are to come, digest what they have to say, and encourage staff to continue to do the work that they have done for these years despite the challenges that we face. We hope you do whatever is in our ability to make change. We hope that the Russian invasion will magically come to an end. We hope inflation can be tamed sooner than later. We hope when we go to the supermarkets, we'll not only see the goods on the shelves, but they'll be decently priced. In the meantime, we congratulate the office of the budget for the great work that you continue to do, and we'll hear from you again soon.

MAYOR MESSAM: Thank you. Just a couple of comments. First, Mr. Manager, I thank the budget team for their continued and consistent value they bring to the community. I can't underscore enough the daunting task that we faced as a city, as we were facing the pandemic, and our team really rose to the occasion to prepare for the blunt to come, not necessarily knowing, no one knew what those impacts would be. So kudos to the team to being able to navigate those challenges. Now that we, for the most part, have the pandemic in our rearview mirror, the team is preparing, and has put forth options for us to navigate what we will call our new norm, which is still plagued with a certain level of uncertainty. This economic picture is unique. Some of the typical fiscal cycles, and economic cycles are not happening. Are we in an inflationary period, are we not? Typically, inflationary periods are marked with a roaring economy, but unemployment rates are still at a historical low, so the feds have a big task ahead of them, because, basically, to slow down this economy, interest rates have to be increased, production has to be slowed, which basically means that you're going to be putting people out of work to slow this economy down. So there's no easy answers, and here we are as a city having to try to predict what the economy is going to present, so that we can have realistic projections ahead of us, as we're making determinations to carry us out through, not just for the next fiscal year, but years to come, so that's the challenge before us. I do think, though, it is important for us to understand, as it relates to our performance based off of past projections and recommendations that have come before this Commission. I know that there have been some recommendations by staff to hedge our risk, as it relates to our expenses, versus revenues through our General Fund. Two of note was the paying down the retirement obligations to our pension, as well as our voluntary employment program. This Commission adopted both, to the Commission's credit. However, they weren't adopted specifically in the manner of which staff had recommended, which has some contribution to our current fiscal position. Our reality is that, yes, we did adopt those

two programs, and there were some benefits, but looking back, we haven't maximized those opportunities if adopted as suggested and recommended by staff. So we do have to realize that portion of the equation. Even though we're in the position to state that we're not proposing a millage rate increase, our staff is not presenting or proposing a millage rate increase, we're not quite out of the woods yet, because we don't know what the economy is going to put before us. We don't know what's going to happen our -- in terms of international affairs; there's a current war going on out there; we don't know if that's going to escalated, or if more will start. We don't know on the political landscape what that's going to look like, and what the impacts that's going to have on our economy, so we have to do the best that we can do, in terms of information that we know right now. But I would implore us, as a city, as a commission, and to the staff, and the recommendations that we fully exercise fiscal caution in our projections. We can't assume property rate increases are going to continue to soar, because nothing stays up forever. We've been a bullish market, probably, for the last decade, now we're heading into a bear market, so we are best positioned by exercising fiscal caution in our projections within reason, so that we can ensure that we can manage; and we've been doing a good job at that, between the recommendations coming from staff, and what is adopted by the Commission for our budget process. So I do look forward to continuing to dive through the budget. I did also put an asterisk around the rescue plan dollars for us to look at those organizations, but the asterisk I did put is in terms of the dollars going into the workforce. I think it was only \$65,000.00 allocated to that. I don't know what type of workforce dollars, or what programs that's going towards, but if it's going towards providing workforce training for our community -- I guess I'm just going to ask the question. What type of workforce funding is that? That was one of the list, one of the items on that list.

MS. GAYLE: So we do have a computer lab at the Multi-Service Complex.

MAYOR MESSAM: I'm sorry, I can't hear you.

MS. GAYLE: We do have a computer lab at the Multi-Service Complex that, from time to time, individuals come to us needing -- which, if they don't have those capabilities at home, the Rescue Plan Act, under the outreach, does allow us to provide equipment or access for internet, and those types of things for individuals who do not have those who are affected. So, you know, somebody lost their job, they're still affected by COVID, they're trying to find a job. We are putting funds in that to get the internet access up to speed in that location, to make sure our computer monitors are there, and to get instructors that can assist individuals with online training courses, with applying for jobs online, with online access to different platforms. So that instructor will be there, the equipment will be there, the internet access will be there to help individuals to get up to speed with getting a job in that community which was heavily impacted by COVID. So those are the types of things in that particular category that this funding will use to upscale that computer lab, so that the community can better access and manipulate it to find jobs as they need.

MAYOR MESSAM: Okay, and all-noble -- noble resources for our community. My initial thought was to see if how we could, perhaps, increase resources to invest into workforce training or resources for our community, especially in this economy, with the changing dynamics, the skill sets that are used. So whatever that would qualify under this funding, perhaps looking at increasing, or reallocating, or putting additional -- shifting some funds around to see how we maximize what you just stated, in terms of assisting those who may be out of work, who may be looking to obtain additional skills, so they can come themselves more marketable in the workforce place. So I just wanted to get that clarification. All right. And that concludes my comments and my remarks, so thanks so much. Commissioner Chambers, you're recognized.

COMMISSIONER CHAMBERS: Thank you. I have a question for Mr. Rafael and staff. In regards to our seniors, and those who qualify for certain reduction or cancellation of certain tax portion of their bill, like fire fees, and some people get waiver from -- we have some military, but especially our seniors. What are doing, in terms of getting the message out, in terms of the deadline, and so forth, so we can make sure that those people who are on fixed income take advantage of those benefits moving forward, so at least they're getting some help there.

MR. SANMIGUEL: Right. So we do have a program that seniors, low-income seniors, long-term, low-income seniors can -- we can waive the fire fee for. Also, we have a program that 100 households qualified for last year, low-income households that own and occupy their properties, that hit certain income thresholds; they don't go above certain income thresholds based on their housing size, that they can apply for this program too, so that we can waive their fire fee. The application is online; it's through the Social Services Department, and we usually get around -- around 100 successful applicants every year.

COMMISSIONER CHAMBERS: Yeah. The problem I'm having is, if you don't know the program exist, if you don't have a way of applying for it, if you have someone to help you, it goes unused. So I'm trying to make sure we are reaching those folks, and making them aware, and some type of assistance is there to assist them to do the application. That's more my concern. I know we have the programs, we have the availability, but how are we reaching these seniors that are in desperate need of these discount; that's my main thing is to reach them, and to assist them.

MS. DAVENPORT: Good afternoon. Katrina Davenport, Social Services. Mayor, Vice Mayor, Commission, during the fire fee exemption process, we have several things that we do to make sure that we're reaching the seniors who need this the most. The first is any senior who automatically has a senior exemption on the TRIM Notice, they qualify automatically, and they don't have to apply; we automatically put their application in for them, and put them into the roll, so that they will not be charged. Additionally, we have Broward County property appraisers come out to our senior centers a couple times a year, and talk about this program to make sure that the word gets out. It also goes out through Broward County, and it's also -- a flyer goes out through our wonderful Marketing

Department to tell the community that this is available. So those are the things that we're doing right now.

COMMISSIONER CHAMBERS: So for seniors who are not in our senior group, or senior center, folk that living on their own, who's taken care of by their children, or -- how do we get to those folks?

MS. DAVENPORT: There are also some income qualifications for this program, as well as the assessed value on their property. So even though there may be a lot of seniors, they may not necessarily qualify for this program.

COMMISSIONER CHAMBERS: And what are the deadlines, as far as the fire fee, and all these other --

MS. DAVENPORT: It runs May 1<sup>st</sup> through July 31<sup>st</sup> is the application process.

COMMISSIONER CHAMBERS: July 31<sup>st</sup>?

MS. DAVENPORT: Mm-hmm.

COMMISSIONER CHAMBERS: Okay, thank you.

MS. DAVENPORT: My pleasure.

COMMISSIONER CHAMBERS: A question for -- these new properties that was built or are being built, what's the process? When do they come on the tax roll? For instance, the Univision properties with Lennar Homes, 172<sup>nd</sup>?

MR. SANMIGUEL: So they come on the tax roll as soon as they get issued a CO, and the -- and the BCPA, it takes note of that, and then they get a TRIM Notice, and they get on the tax rolls. It may be a situation where they're not paying for the taxes for the entire year, so it could be prorated, based on when the CO was issued, but it's as soon as the CO is issued; is when we consider them to be on the tax roll.

COMMISSIONER CHAMBERS: And I must say a while back we have a proposal to purchase apartment building down the street with tax revenue; we will be giving back a certain percentage of the rev -- or maybe all of it, I'm not sure anymore; it's been a while, in exchange for a long-term purchase of this building, and I remember one of the number that was out there was like, maybe, \$800,000.00 per year.

MR. SANMIGUEL: Right. If you're talking about the -- I want to say the workforce housing project that we were talking about down in Red Road or -- yes, so the proposal was to -- for a third-party company to issue low-interest bonds to buy that property, and then to turn that into workforce housing --

COMMISSIONER CHAMBERS: Right.

MR. SANMIGUEL: -- that's more affordable. And, in turn, we would see a reduction in our tax rolls by -- because they wouldn't be paying the City tax roll; they wouldn't be on the tax roll for the City, at least; they wouldn't be paying the ad valorem taxes, because they would be now an institutional type. That would be kind of like treated as -- for example, this building. So we wouldn't be a private property, it would be more an institutional property, so, yeah, they wouldn't be paying the taxes. And that was around \$800,000.00/\$700,000.00 per year. But you weight that against the cost of having workforce housing.

COMMISSIONER CHAMBERS: But I remember the numbers that was out there was the minimum of \$800,000.00 that we would be giving out. Am I correct?

MR. SANMIGUEL: I think it was around \$800,000.00 but I can definitely research that.

COMMISSIONER CHAMBERS: More or less. But let's take \$800,000.00. If we pull that from the revenue that we --

MR. SANMIGUEL: We pulled that from the tax roll, and we would see a reduction going forward for the next -- you know, I think the project -- the life term on the project was 30, to 35 years, so we would project that out to the 30 years, but that project didn't -- I want to say it didn't come to fruition. I believe that project didn't happen. So that's one of --

COMMISSIONER CHAMBERS: We didn't move forward on that project, because --

MR. SANMIGUEL: Right.

COMMISSIONER CHAMBERS: -- for several reason; one was the amount of tax we would be foregoing moving forward for a number of years. The second reason was the place was fully rented, or almost fully rented. The main reason was we wouldn't be able to control the renters, in terms of renters; the people we were trying to help, we couldn't help them, because there was no guarantee the folks would have moved out -- was going to move out the building. We couldn't determine who gets in, so it would have been a moot point to try to help a certain sector of our people, and based on the housing or Fair Housing Act, you can't just select folks and put them in there. So it would have been very difficult to assist the very folks that we really want to help, and I think that was -- personally, my opinion, -- because how would we move people out, and move the folks in. It just wouldn't -- it was really -- it would be really convoluted, and it wouldn't really work. The folks who really need to be helped wouldn't get help, and that's the case with other projects, because of not having any structured, or meaning ways of -- in the housing laws in Florida to help the people that we really want to help, except some seniors we can help in some ways. But that was my thing. But I just want to say that this Commission, especially with the help of these two ladies, we've been able to make some good decisions with a lot of stuff that -- challenge that we have faced with over the last couple

of years. And I'm very proud of the decisions that they have made along with staff. I think they were very fiscally sound, and that's what helping us to weather the storm, and to continue to move forward. Thank you.

MAYOR MESSAM: Are there any more comments or questions for staff? Seeing none. Thank you for the presentation.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

MAYOR MESSAM: See you all next week. The workshop is adjourned.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

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Denise A. Gibbs, CMC  
City Clerk  
DG/cp